

Ag-knowledge

Alberta
AGRICULTURE

a newsletter for Alberta Agriculture staff

September, 1990

Charging Your Batteries at Alberta Women's Week 1990

There's no firm estimate of how many of the over half million hours in the last 60 years were used to plan Alberta Women's Weeks.

This year's chairperson, Joan Heath, hesitates to guess at the number of hours she put into the 1990 60th anniversary celebration of AWW. She does know that the work began as soon as AWW '89 ended.

But she is quick to point out that she is not the only one to plan for AWW. A number of people spent many long hours preparing for the event. The committee members were Brenda Monopski, program co-ordinator, Karen Hoover, Becky Lore and Kerry Whwing, program members, Colleen Perce, publicity co-ordinator, Karen Pad, publicity member and Leona Staples, registration co-ordinator.

One of the major reasons for those countless hours and added participants was the 60th anniversary celebration of Alberta Women's Week.

The week itself began when a farm woman from Erskine first visited the Olds School of Agriculture grounds and buildings in 1929. Isobel Townsend was taken by the school she approached the Minister of Agriculture George Padley with the idea that the site could be an excellent place for farm women to come for a holiday. Agreeing to the idea, the schools at Olds and Vermilion were made available for the first official Farm Women's Rest Week in July 1930.

In 1967 the name changed to Alberta Women's Week. Sites were also varied over the years, until Olds College was chosen as the official site during the '70s. As well, topics have changed over the years to stay current to the times.

Farm/rural women's organizations have been long time supporters of the program. Alberta Women's Institutes, United Farm Women of Alberta, Women of Unifarm have all played a major role in Alberta Women's Week over the past 60 years. That support has been given in many forms, either through sponsoring members to attend, or participating on the planning committee. Barb Scarlett from Innisfail, with Alberta Women's Institute and Elaine Deeg, from Langdon and Margaret Linklater from Lacombe, with Alberta Women in Support of Agriculture acted as program advisors.

The focus, however, of AWW has still remained relatively unchanged over the past 60 years. The four-day event gave women across the province the opportunity to learn and expand their knowledge and skills needed for daily farm living.

Topics ranged from the Goods and Services Tax, literacy, strengthening rural communities and later life career choices.

"Two of the most successful sessions were food related: the optional day workshop on Alberta wild rice and barley, and also the select-a-session on Alberta Beef and Fresh vegetables," says Heath, "The first workshop mentioned had to turn at least 30 people away and the select-a-session was filled to capacity of 60 both times it ran."

"DA Dave Samm's session on family communication was another very successful select-a-session. It filled to capacity both times running. His combination of wit and use of personal family experiences played a significant role in its popularity," says Heath.

But aside from the planning and organizing going on prior to the event, Heath says the event was a huge success. "We received an enormous amount of praise and compliments, both verbal and written. One participant wrote 'I have thoroughly enjoyed the whole conference and will go home with my batteries charged. A job well done'."



Joan Heath, Chairperson for this year's Alberta Women's Week held July 23 - 26, gives a speech to the 212 participants at Olds College.

The Straight Goods about Cholesterol

Remember the days when coffee break conversation centred around golf scores and hockey stats?

Now the numbers most frequently bandied about are cholestreol levels and heart rates.

It's no suprise. Wilfred Brimley nightly invades our television sets extolling the virtues of oat bran. Super-market labels blare out "cholesterol free" on products we never knew--and probably never did--contain the dreaded substance (for example peanut butter).

Confused? Concerned? Relax. Here are the straight goods from Occupational Health Service of Personnel Administration Office...the people who bring health education programs to the public service.

First, remember that cholesterol is found in every part of the body, and is essential for good health. But problems can arise when we have too much cholesterol in our blood stream. A high blood cholesterol level is a major risk in heart disease and stroke.

Do you know your cholesterol level? If you recently had a medical, your doctor may have checked it. It's especially important if you have a family history of heart disease, heart attacks, stroke or high blood pressure.

The Canadian Heart Foundation recommends a blood cholesterol level no greater than 4.9 mmol/dl for adults. If your cholesterol level is high, your doctor may also check your lipoproteins. (In order to travel in the blood, cholesterol combines with protein to form lipoproteins.)

High density lipoproteins, often call 'good cholesterol', are believed to help carry cholesterol out of the blood. Low density lipoproteins, or 'bad cholesterol' are major risk factors in heart diseases and stroke. We can reduce our risks by:

- not smoking
- controlling high blood pressure with the help of your doctor
- exercising regularly (one-half hour three times a week minimum)
- maintaining a healthy weight
- controlling stress
- limiting our intake of foods high in fat

What should we eat?

We've all heard that saturated fats raise the level of cholesterol in the blood, but how do we know which foods are high in saturated fats or cholesterol? Unless your doctor has

advised you to follow a specific low-cholesterol/low saturated fat diet, it is much simpler and healthier to reduce your total fat intake and avoid certain methods of cooking and service food.

Limit intake of:

- butter, margarine, mayonnaise
- vegetable oil, shortening, lard
- fat on beef, pork, lamb, poultry

Watch for 'hidden' fats in:

- baked goods - croissants, pastries, donuts, most commercial muffins
- most crackers and snack foods
- high fat dairy products like full-fat cheeses, cream etc.

Choose:

- lean cuts of beef, pork, veal, lamb

- low-fat cooking methods like baking, broiling, roasting, poaching or using non-stick pans.

Avoid:

- deep-fat fried meat, fish, poultry
- fat from soups, stews, gravies

It isn't difficult to make these changes. And remember, the less fat in your diet, the fewer calories.

For further information, contact your nearest Occupational Health Service office:

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Edmonton: | 427-7440 |
| Calgary: | 297-6239 |
| Grande Prairie: | 583-5151 |
| Lethbridge: | 381-5128 |
| Red Deer: | 340-5290 |

Award Presented to New Field Services ADM

Just before Irene Leavitt was settling into her new position of Field Services Assistant Deputy Minister last month, she was bestowed with another honor.

In July, Leavitt was presented with the Honorary Life Membership Award from the Canadian Society of Extension (CSE) during the CSE annual meeting in Penticton.

The award recognizes persons who merit national attention for noteworthy accomplishments in extension or teaching. Length, dedication and noteworthy service in the field of extension along with other outstanding achievements and peer recognition are award criteria. Recipients must be nominated by five of their peers.

"It was a thrill and privilege to be honored by my peers and fellow extension workers. It's very fulfilling to receive this kind of recognition," says Leavitt.

Leavitt was cited for placing emphasis on improved farm management practices, increasing the profile of 4-H and home economics and her role in developing a strategic direction for Alberta Agriculture. In announcing the award, the society said: "Her dedication and work ethics are a standard for others to follow. Irene Leavitt combines technical expertise with experience, confidence,

judgement, ambition, leadership, drive, a natural sense for smart decision making and the ability to play effectively on a team".

Throughout the years, she has also taken an active role in a number of professional and other organizations including the Canadian Society of Extension, the Canadian 4-H Council and the Alberta Home Economics Association. She received a distinguished service award from the Alberta Home Economics Association this April.

Leavitt is originally from Saskatchewan and is a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan's BSc in home economics program.



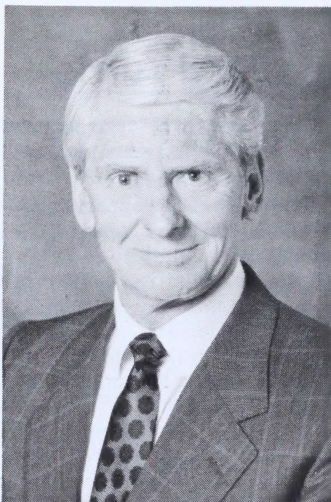
*Irene Leavitt, Field Services new
ADM*

Deputy Minister's Column

When the departmental reorganization was announced in early August, I stated that bringing production and marketing together under one Assistant Deputy Minister, Barry Mehr, would facilitate closer collaboration and co-operation between the two sectors. In this column I'd like to elaborate.

It has been one of my principle objectives, since assuming this position of Deputy Minister in 1981, to establish closer working relationships among our department's divisions. I believe we have progressed in this regard, aided by previous organizational changes and the development and implementation of our Strategic Management Plan.

The necessary link between production and marketing is quite obvious. The agriculture and food industry must supply the kind and quality of commodities and products needed to meet domestic and export market demand. This is the long term



key to industry viability. Achieving this goal requires teamwork within Alberta Agriculture and with the province's farmers and food processors.

The 'Beef to Japan' project is an example of how this type of teamwork can be effective. A cross-section of department resources are jointly involved in achieving a common goal. Japan is the first new market for Alberta beef in a number of decades. The development of this new market will have implications for forage development, feed grain production as well as direct benefits to the livestock and meat sectors.

Co-operation between production and marketing staff is certainly not new. For example, production specialists have often participated in international market development missions. The new structure ensures a growth and strengthening of this kind of joint activity.

The objective of this organizational change is to make our department's marketing programs more responsive to the production realities in Alberta and our production programs increasingly sensitive to market opportunities.

The total integration will take time. What is happening now is a very positive liaison and working relationship between the directors and branch heads of the new sector. The next step will be to further develop this type of working relationship across the entire department and with our industry.

On the whole, the amalgamation will facilitate new, different and expanded relationships. I ask for your continued co-operation and support if we are to realize the benefits of a more close-knit organization. It is people that make an organization work.

H. B. McEwen

New Ways to Give to United Way

The top of the thermometer is marked at \$30,000. That's the goal of Alberta Agriculture's Edmonton area United Way campaign.

The campaign kicks off on September 26 in the J.G. O'Donoghue Building's atrium. Other Edmonton area buildings will also be visited during the next week as part of the campaign launch, says Shirley Myers, chair of this year's fund raising campaign.

Kick off activities include setting up the main campaign watch thermometer with assistance from Deputy Minister Ben McEwen and one of the department's two ministers. Staff will also be introduced to the department's canvass team.

"The preferred giving program represents a new direction and a

significant change to how people can donate to the United Way's annual fund raising campaign. It's a brand new feature of the United Way appeal," says Myers.

Best described as a new concept in giving, the program offers four choices to potential donors. The first option is the usual method, the gift is distributed by the organization's citizen review that allocates funds to agencies and programs.

A second allows the person to specify their gift be distributed in the citizen review with the exception of one or more agencies.

In the third option, contributors specify which United Way member agency or agencies their donation goes to. These gifts will be forwarded directly to the agency within 90 days.

A seven per cent administration fee is deducted to cover administration and handling.

"As well, the final option allows you to donate to charitable organizations that aren't members of the United Way," she says.

New pledge cards will show all of the options. Canvassers will also have more information. As well, people can ask questions at group sessions planned during the beginning of the department campaign.

Anyone interested in helping out with the campaign can contact a member of the campaign committee. The committee is: Shirley Myers (7-2412); Kim Whitehead (2-1892); Laura D'Amico (2-9167); Monica Staszuk (7-2151); Jayne Wilde (7-2111); Cathy Wolters (7-2121) or Gail Matheson (7-2417).

Farm Talk...of Ropes and Turtles

-by John Ruschkowski,
District Agriculturist, Oyen

Paleontologists tell us that as animal life evolved from the dinosaur age until now, one animal that went virtually unchanged is the turtle.

By comparison, as agriculture in Western Canada evolved from horses and threshing crews to John Deere Titans and personal computers, one aspect of farm and ranch life has remain essentially unchanged. Most farmers and ranchers still have, and occasionally use, a rope.

When discussing ropes, the first distinction that has to be made is the difference between farmer ropes and cowboy ropes. Although cowboy ropes are often considered "real" ropes they kind of look and feel like plastic. You can find cowboy ropes hanging on a nail in the porch, hanging on the gun rack in the half-ton, hanging on the saddle horn, or hanging just about anyplace else.

Cowboy ropes have several uses. The main use is to rope plastic steer heads. When chasing cattle they can be waved above your head to break the monotony and help you resist the urge to break everything into a run and have some excitement. If you actually know how to use one, at branding you can ride around quietly on a horse instead of being kicked in the face while you are wrestling in the manure on the ground. Being able to use one also allows you to go team beer drinking (alias team roping) on Sundays.

Whereas cowboy ropes are usually on display and easy to find, farmer ropes are quite often a lot harder to find. A good place to start looking is on the ground in the corrals. You can usually find an end sticking out of the straw and manure somewhere. Another frequently used storage space is the half-way under the slip tank in the back of the fuel truck.

Although there are certain unwritten rules limiting the uses of a cowboy rope, for a farmer rope the imagination's the limit. Common uses include tying gates closed, making the kids a swing and tying up the dog after it has killed some chickens. An important point to make here is that if you decide to use someone's cowboy rope for a farm rope purpose, be sure

the owner does not own a gun, even if they are a good friend.

Having had the opportunity to use a lot of different ropes on many operations, I've noticed some differences in quality. Firstly, cowboy ropes are almost always clean except for a few cattle hairs. After using a farmer rope, you usually look like you've changed a transmission.

There are subtle differences in cowboy ropes such as length, weight and thickness. The differences in farmer ropes are easily recognized, even by an untrained eye. Some resemble a huge piece of knitting wool. In anything over a five mph wind they take the form of a wind sock. If you want to make a loop with these ropes you have to hold it open with both hands. At the other end of the scale are the ropes that have been holding the mower sickle off the ground since it was last used in 1972. To use these ropes you bend them into something resembling a loop, staple this to the corral fence and chase the animal toward it.

There is also a noticeable difference in the range at which ropes can be used. Some cowboy ropes are good up to 25 feet. Very few farmer ropes can be used further than four feet from the animal. Consequently cowboys have horses from which they can use their ropes. In order to use their ropes, farmers build corrals. Occasionally a farm rope is used out of the back of a half-ton. From personal experience, when using a rope this way, do not use too big a loop because one end can slip behind your back while the other end goes over the cow's neck.

Cowboys take pride in long, consistent catching. Usually, the worst thing that can happen to a farmer is the loop he throws actually gets caught on the cow. Some cowboys have scars on their fingers from dallying on the horn. A lot more farmers have scars on their knees and heads from getting dragged across the pasture or into a corral fence.

Although some people wish ropes had gone the way of the dinosaur, it appears this unique bit of agricultural heritage will be with us for many more years of work and amusement.

On the Move

Welcome to the following people who have recently joined Alberta Agriculture:

Larry Batalden, Joyce Jessey, Robert Thirlwel, Elaine Ash, Marilyn Fordice, Robert Mybara, Patti Breland, Ed Chell and Darcy Fitzgerald.

Transfers:

From the engineering branch, **Donna Urban** is moving on to the department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife and moving to the engineering branch is **Carolyn Gingras** from Crow Benefit.

Good luck to the following people as they leave Alberta Agriculture:

Lawrence Bailey, Pat Hawkins, Cathy Gaillivan, Ed Morley, Michelle Bowles, Elvira Smid, Peggy MacNeil, Ruby Curran, Gary Byman, Karen Thompson, Wendy O'Brien, Dawn Stillwell, Linda Finch and Rachelle Loeppky.

Our condolences to the print media branch on the death of their colleague **Arick Lamdan**, who passed away in August. Arick was an artist with the department. He started with the home study program in 1981 and transferred to the print media branch in 1985.

- 1. How many labour groups are involved in the handling of grain from the time it is unloaded into the country elevator, until it is loaded on the customer's ocean vessel?
a) 5
b) 14
c) 37
d) 50
- 2. How many pounds of grain does it take to produce a market hog?
a) 214
b) 1,150
c) 750
d) 550
- 3. The Canadian Food Processing Industry (excluding fish products) exports about nine per cent of total shipments. This is _____ than than of the U.S.A.
a) less than half
b) about the same
c) more than double
- 4. What percentage of the Alberta population depend on agriculture for their livelihood?
a) 9%
b) 12%
c) 66%
d) 30%
- 5. An average chicken lays how many eggs per year?
a) 96
b) 252
c) 365
d) 641

ANSWERS

- 1. c) 37 labour unions
- 2. c) 750 pounds
- 3. c) more than double. Canada's Food processing industry exports about nine per cent of total shipments compared to about four per cent in the United States.
- 4. d) 30%
- 5. b) 252

TEST Yourself

How's Your Article Acumen?

To test your article acumen, pick either a or an in each sentence.

- 1. (A, An) hilarious, Marx-Brothers-like scene ensued when the fax machine ran out of paper.
- 2. George was (a, an,) habitual 15 minutes late every morning.

- 3. The boss said he planned to use (a, an) historical allusion or two in his letter to the shareholders.
- 4. She said she wouldn't take the job if it paid only (a, an) \$800-per-week salary.
- 5. During the interview, she said she had always wanted to be (a, an) RN.

ANSWERS

- 1. A
- 2. a
- 3. a. (in modern usage, the first three words require a because the h is sounded when pronouncing the word. Formerly, the h was not pronounced so an was used.)
- 4. Use an because the choice depends on whether the initial sound of the first letter of the word that follows it is a vowel or a consonant sound. In this case, it's eight, which begins with a vowel sound.
- 5. Abbreviations take a or an depending on how they are pronounced, so this would take an. When pronounced as a word, however, registered begins with a consonant sound and would take a.

SOURCE: Communications Briefings, Personnel Journal, 245 Fischer Ave., Costa Mesta, CA 92626, August 1990, Vol. 9, No. 10.

DO YOU HAVE AN AG-KNOWLEDGING IDEA?

If so - I'd like to hear about it!

As *Agknowledge* editor, I'm always looking for new and exciting events happening with Alberta Agriculture and happening to department staff. If you hear an exciting story about a department program, staff accomplishment or an idea you think would be valuable information to the rest of the department staff, please fill out this form. And you may see your ag-knowledging idea published in the next issue!

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM...

STORY IDEA: _____

WHO: _____

WHAT: _____

WHERE: _____

WHEN: _____

YOUR NAME: _____

BRANCH: _____

PLEASE FORWARD TO: Tracey Munro
Agknowledge Editor
Print Media Branch
Edmonton
Phone: 427-2121

